

Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of all objections and rejections upon entry of the Amendment.

As above stated, the formality rejection under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, can be withdrawn. The Examiner's constructive comments are noted and appreciated. Applicant has endeavored to respond to them with the amendment to claim 2 and cancellation without prejudice of claims 13 and 14. The objection to claim 4 is now moot in view of its replacement by new claim 16 which corresponds word for word to the prior amended version of claim 4.

Applicant respectfully suggests that claims 1, 2, 5, 8-12, 15 and 16 each individually define novel unobvious inventions over Hatakeyama et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,804,287, in view of Visser, U.S. Patent No. 5,851,606.

The claimed laminated extruded resin sheet according to the present invention comprises more than two layers. It can comprise three layers as recited in the claims. There may be a resin layer (A) which has two differing surfaces. On a first surface, there is a layer comprised of a resin layer (B). On the other of the surfaces for resin layer (A) is found another resin layer (B). Thus, the resin layer structure will at least comprise resin layer (B)/resin layer (A)/resin layer (B). The outer surface layers therefore can contain methyl methacrylate resin particles.

Against the claimed multi-layered structure, if a sheet has only a two-layer structure, then a molded article having a smaller bias of thickness is not obtainable even after secondary thermoforming of such a sheet. This becomes evident by comparing Example 4 with the Comparative Example 1 in the present specification.

Now against both the claims and rebuttal evidence in the specification, the references should be measured. When so measured, applicant submits there is no prima facie case of obviousness.

The Hatakeyama et al. reference merely discloses an acrylic film having a one-layered structure in which an acrylic resin (with its properties) applied to a surface of a molded article produced from an ABS resin, a polycarbonate (PC) resin, and the like. In this structure, the acrylic film having the one-layer is vacuum molded in a mold, a base resin such as the ABS resin or PC resin is successively injected into the mold. A molded article laminated with the acrylic film on its surface is then said to be obtained.

The reference does not describe or suggest a molded sheet.

However, even if the reference did describe the obtained article as being a sheet, the sheet would only have a two-layer structure in which a surface layer does not contain methyl methacrylate resin particles. Thus, a molded article having a smaller bias and thickness cannot be obtained from the sheet following secondary thermoforming.

It should therefore be evident that the article obtained according to the reference is different from the resin sheet according to the claimed invention. The reference does not teach or suggest anything with respect to a resin sheet having a three-layered structure, nor does it teach or suggest or disclose anything that motivates a person having only ordinary skill in the art to providing surface layers which contain methyl methacrylate resin particles.

The secondary reference to Visser does not make up for the shortcomings in the primary reference. The secondary Visser reference merely discloses an acrylic resin sheet having a one-layered structure which contains methyl methacrylate resin particles. This sheet is distinct from the present invention, and there is neither description nor suggestion of the applicant's claimed invention in the reference. More pointedly, however, there is no

suggestion or teaching in the reference to the multi-layered structure as claimed, i.e., at least comprised of resin layer (B)/resin layer (A)/resin layer (B).

Finally, even if a person of only ordinary skill in the art would have combined the two references, which applicant does not concede, the resulting article would still fall short of the claimed inventions. The obtained sheet of the combined references would merely have a two-layered structure which corresponds to a sheet obtained in Comparative Example 1 in the present specification.

Therefore, the claim sheet having a three layered structure (resin layer (A) and resin layers (B) as recited in claim 1) would not have been obvious to a person having only ordinary skill in the art. The references neither disclose, describe or suggest anything with respect to such a multi-layered structure which can be subjected to secondary thermoforming so as to obtain a molded article having a smaller bias of thickness.

Thus, withdrawal of this Section 103(a) rejection is respectfully requested.

Having addressed all matters, applicant submits their application is deserving of a Notice of Allowance. Applicants respectfully but earnestly solicit such Notice.

Respectfully submitted,

PILLSBURY MADISON & SUTRO, LLP

By:  39045

for Kendrew H. Colton

Reg. No. 30368

Tel. No. (202) 861-3606

Fax No. (202) 822-0944

KHC:jcc
1100 New York Avenue, NW
Ninth Floor, East Tower
Washington, DC 20005-3918